

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.-96. Cancelled

97. (New) A method of awarding a prize in a gaming system including a plurality of game consoles comprising:

providing a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution;

periodically receiving count data from each game console, the count data representing at least one parameter of a game console;

calculating a total value representing the total count data received;

comparing the total value with the trigger value; and

transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize.

98. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.

99. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the prize instruction signal is output from the output means to at least one game console.100. The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the prize instruction signal includes a prize display signal and a game console signal for updating one or more of the game consoles.

100. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the output means is connected to a display means which indicates that a prize has been won by the at least one game console.

101. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset value to produce the trigger value.

102. (New) The method as claimed in claim 101 wherein the offset value is calculated and stored in a memory location prior to addition to the random variable.

103. (New) The method as claimed in claim 102 wherein the random variable has a distribution which is modified by a function to generate a value with a geometric distribution.

104. (New) The method as claimed in claim 103 wherein the function includes an inverse geometric distribution.

105. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the prize is determined independently of the count data.

106. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the prize instruction signal is output to the gaming console from which count data was received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

107. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein count data is collected synchronously with game play on each gaming console.

108. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein count data is collected asynchronously with game play on at least one gaming console.

109. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the predetermined relationship is that the total value is equal to or greater than the trigger value.

110. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the predetermined relationship is that the total value is related to the trigger value through a mathematical relationship.

111. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the count data represents one game played on one game console.

112. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 wherein the count data includes one or more of the following parameters:

a predetermined amount of money spent on a gaming console;

a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console;

a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles, each time a gaming console is played;

a predetermined turnover of gaming consoles;

a predetermined function of turnover, one event occurring on one or more game consoles.

113. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 including a loyalty system including transaction terminals whereby every time a customer makes a transaction count data is transmitted to a central console whereby a person has a chance of winning a jackpot.

114. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 including a controller, a trigger value generator, a jackpot triggering means and a display means separate from each gaming console.

115. (New) The method as claimed in claim 114 wherein the system includes a storage means for storing count data.

116. (New) The method as claimed in claim 115 including the step of providing an accumulator for totaling the count data stored in the storage means.

117. (New) The method as claimed in claim 116 wherein the controller provides the random trigger value.

118. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 including the step of providing a new random trigger value at a predetermined time interval.

119. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97, wherein a new random trigger value is provided after at least one game controller issues a prize.

120. (New) The method as claimed in claim 97 including the step of calculating a random value having one probability distribution and transforming the random value by a predetermined function to generate a random value with a different probability distribution.

121. (New) A controller for use in a gaming system, the controller comprising:
a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution;
a generator for generating a random trigger value at predetermined times;
a receiver for receiving count data from each game console, the count data representing at least one parameter of a game console;
a calculating means for calculating a total value representing the total count data received by the receiver;
a comparator for comparing the total value with the trigger value; and
a processor for outputting a prize signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

122. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 121 wherein the processor is adapted to output a prize signal to the game console from which count data was received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with a trigger value.

123. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 121 wherein the trigger value generator is adapted to periodically select a value of the random variable, calculate an offset value and add this to the random variable to produce the trigger value.

124. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 123 wherein the trigger value is determined independently of turnover of the gaming system.

125. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 124 wherein the random variable has a minimum value of 1.

126. (New) A gaming system comprising:

- a plurality of game consoles;
- a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution;
- a prize triggering means; and
- a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from each game console, the count data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by the controller and compare the total value with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

127. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 126 wherein the controller is adapted to operate the prize trigger means to transmit the prize instruction signal to one of the game consoles from which count data was received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

128. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 127 wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.

129. (New) The method as claimed in claim 128 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset value to produce the trigger value.

130. (New) A method of awarding a prize in a gaming system including at least one game console comprising:

providing a random trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution;

periodically receiving count data from one game console, the count data representing at least one parameter of the game console;

calculating a total value representing the total count data received;

comparing the total value with the trigger value; and

transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize.

131. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the prize instruction signal is transmitted independent of count data received during an elapsed period.

132. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the gaming system includes a plurality of game consoles.

133. (New) The method as claimed in claim 132 including an accumulator means for accumulating count data separately for each game console.

134. (New) The method as claimed in claim 133 including a totalizer operable to calculate a total value representing the total count data stored in the accumulator for each game console.

135. (New) The method as claimed in claim 134 wherein each total value calculated by the totalizer is compared with the trigger value and a prize instruction signal is transmitted to the output means if any one or more of the total values has a predetermined relationship with a trigger value.

136. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the predetermined relationship with a trigger value includes one or more of:

the total value is equal to the trigger value;

the total value is greater than the trigger value; and

the total value is a multiple of the trigger value, wherein the total value is related to the trigger value through a mathematical relationship.

137. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the count data is indicative of the amount wagered on one game console.

138. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein count data is received from the at least one game console each time an amount is wagered on the at least one game console.

139. (New) The method as claimed in claim 138 wherein the total value is recalculated each time count data is received from the at least one game console.

140. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the output means is connected to a display means which indicates that a prize has been won by the at least one game console.

141. (New) The method as claimed in claim 140 wherein the display means includes a visual display separate from the at least one game console.

142. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 including the step of providing a plurality of random trigger values with each trigger value being associated with a respective gaming console.

143. (New) The method as claimed in claim 131 wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.

144. (New) The method as claimed in claim 132 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset value to produce the random trigger value.

145. (New) The method as claimed in claim 144 wherein the offset value is calculated and stored in a memory location prior to addition to the random variable.

146. (New) The method as claimed in claim 131 wherein the random variable has a distribution which is modified by a function to generate a value with a geometric distribution.

147. (New) The method as claimed in claim 146 wherein the function includes an inverse geometric distribution.

148. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the value of the prize is determined independently of the count data.

149. (New) The method as claimed in claim 148 wherein the value of the prize is determined independently of turnover occurring within a predetermined period of time.

150. (New) The method as claimed in claim 148 wherein the count data is collected synchronously with game play on each game console.

151. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the comparing step is performed synchronously with playing the gaming console.

152. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the comparing step is performed asynchronously with playing the gaming console.

153. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the comparing step is performed synchronously with receiving count data.

154. (New) The method as claimed in claim 131 wherein the comparing step is performed asynchronously with receiving count data.

155. (New) The method as claimed in claim 132 wherein the count data represents data selected from the list consisting of:

one game played on one game console;

multiple games played on one game console; and

one event occurring on one game console.

156. (New) The method as claimed in claim 132 wherein the count data comprises at least one of the following:

a predetermined amount wagered on a gaming console;

a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console;

a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles;

a predetermined turnover of one or more gaming consoles; or

a predetermined function of turnover.

157. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 including the step of providing a new random trigger value at a predetermined time.

158. (New) The method as claimed in claim 157 wherein the new random trigger value is provided for one game console after a prize is issued to that game console.

159. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 including calculating a random value having one probability distribution and transforming the random value by a predetermined function to generate a random value with a different probability distribution.

160. (New) The method as claimed in claim 159 wherein the random value is generated by a pseudo random number generator.

161. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the trigger value is reset more frequently than once per output of the prize instruction signal.

162. (New) The method as claimed in claim 144 wherein the offset value is set to the current total value.

163. (New) The method as claimed in claim 162 wherein the offset value and the random value are selected and a trigger value reset whenever a prize instruction signal is sent to the game console.

164. (New) The method as claimed in claim 130 wherein the count data is reset to a predetermined number after a prize instruction signal is output.

165. (New) The method as claimed in claim 164 wherein the random value is recalculated after the prize instruction signal is output whereby the trigger value is greater than or equal to the total value.

166. (New) A controller for use in a gaming system, the controller comprising:
a generator for generating a random trigger value at predetermined times, the trigger value derived from a random variable having non-uniform distribution;
a receiver for receiving count data from one game console, the count data representing at least one parameter of the game console;
a calculating means for calculating a total value representing the total count data received by the receiver;
a comparator for comparing the total value with the trigger value; and
a processor for outputting a prize signal to the one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

167. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 166 wherein the generator is adapted to select a value for the random variable, calculate an offset value and add this to the random value to produce the random trigger value.

168. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 167 wherein the trigger value is determined independent of turnover of the gaming system.

169. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 163 wherein the random variable value has a minimum value of one.

170. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 167 wherein the receiver is adapted to receive count data from a plurality of game consoles and store the count data in separate memory locations associated with each game console and the calculating means includes an accumulator for calculating a total value for each game console and the comparator is adapted to compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value.

171. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 166 wherein a prize signal is output from the processor to the one game console if the total value is equal to or greater than the trigger value.

172. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 167 wherein the count data includes any one of the group of:

- a predetermined amount wagered on a gaming console;
- a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console;

- a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles;
- a predetermined turnover of one or more gaming consoles; and
- a predetermined function of turnover.

173. (New) The controller as claimed in claim 167 which is configured to be located remotely from each game console.

174. (New) A gaming system comprising:

- at least one game console;
- a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value;
- a prize triggering means; and
- a controller which is adapted to:

- periodically receive count data from one game console, the count data representing at least one parameter of each game console;

- store count data for each game console in a different memory location;

- calculate a total value representing the total count data received by the controller for each game console; and

- compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to the gaming console which has a total value having a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

175. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 174 wherein the trigger value generator comprises a plurality of trigger values each associated with a respective one of the game consoles.

176. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 175 wherein the trigger value is determined independently of count data received over a predetermined period of time.

177. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 175 wherein the trigger value is derived from a random variable which is added to an offset value.

178. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 177 wherein the trigger value is calculated based on a parameter indicative of the probability of a win.

179. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 178 wherein the trigger value is selected independently of an amount wagered on each gaming console over an elapsed period.

180. (New) The method as claimed in claim 179 wherein the controller is located externally from the at least one game console.

181. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 180 wherein the trigger value generator generates a value with one probability distribution and transforms the value by a predetermined function to generate a value with a different probability distribution.

182. (New) The gaming system as claimed in claim 176 wherein the prize triggering means includes a prize setting means which is adapted to set the value of the prize awarded to the game console receiving the prize instruction signal based on a fixed value determined before count data is received from the or each game console.